

**MINUTES
OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
VETERANS MEMORIAL COMMITTEE
HELD AT CITY HALL
DECEMBER 16, 2011
7:30 AM**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Goergen called the meeting to order at 7:30 am

II. ROLL CALL

Answering roll call were Members Lefler, Lonsbury, Christiaansen, Reed, Kojetin, Benson, Cardarelle, Kieffer and Goergen.

III. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Member Kojetin made a motion, seconded by Member Cardarelle, approving the meeting agenda.

Ayes: Christiaansen, Kojetin, Lonsbury, Reed, Lefler, Cardarelle, Kieffer, Benson, Goergen.

Motion carried.

IV. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA

Member Kojetin made a motion, seconded by Member Lonsbury to approve the Consent Agenda as follows:

A. Approval of the October 21, 2011 Veterans Memorial Committee Meeting Minutes.

Ayes: Christiaansen, Kojetin, Lonsbury, Reed, Lefler, Cardarelle, Kieffer, Benson, Goergen.

Motion carried.

V. COMMUNITY COMMENT

There were no members of the general public present at the meeting.

VI. STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Fundraising Plan – Richard Olson & Herb Lefler

Member Lefler informed the committee since their October meeting he has received one phone call from one committee member concerning fundraising which they are following up on. He noted that he thinks there is a bit of an issue in the fact that he has only received one phone call.

Member Lefler pointed out that they have identified a number of high profile potential donors; however, they can't really pursue them until they are prepared. He stated that right now they need \$10,000; \$3,800 for the artist and the remaining for fundraising expenses such as brochures, postage, stationary, etc. He noted that while they have a long range plan they don't have the seed money to execute it. He noted that the people they are going to be talking to are going to be expecting a certain quality of presentation that will speak to how serious they are and the dignity of what it is they are trying to do. Member Lefler stated that he also thinks they need some commitment

from the committee to be able to tell their potential donors that the committee has already raised “X” amount of money.

Richard Olson, an Edina resident who has worked on many fundraisers, gave the committee a little background on himself as well as his experiences with fundraising. He pointed out the committee needs to have materials or something to hand out to the potential donors to give them the vision. He explained when they go out and visit with potential donors they need three things. They need to approach them on an intellectual side; what does it look like, what it’s going to be. Secondly, and most important, is the emotional side. You need to tell a story and come up with some talking points on why they may want to donate. Third, they need to make it easy for the donor to sign up; the physical part of it is key. He stated that they need to go out and tell the story and they need to decide who is going to be the one to do that.

Mr. Olson stated that they know who the wealthy people are in the community and \$400,000 might not be that much if you talk to the right people; however, these people are very smart. Therefore, you need to talk intellectually to them about it and then emotionally tie into it.

Mr. Olson explained to the committee that they need to start with their top donor and work their way down. He indicated as a group they should say who they want for \$200,000 and \$100,000 and \$50,000, etc., and work their way down and peg those people and go to them and solicit them. He stated you need to ask them if they would like to consider a gift of “X” amount and then you need to let them know what they would get, if anything. He noted some people don’t want anything for giving money and some people may want their names on it; therefore, you need to decide as a group what you are going to do.

Member Lonsbury informed the committee that he will take care of the materials needed. He stated that he will also head up the effort to try to get the printing donated. He indicated he is more concerned about what it is they are offering to vie the donors.

Mr. Olson asked the committee who their natural circle of friends are and go out and tap those people and then those people know people. He noted that peer to peer solicitation is better than him going to someone he doesn’t know and asking for a gift. He suggested putting names on a spreadsheet and see who may know them and then assign a solicitor to them and report back every month.

Member Reed commented that his circle of friends are not millionaires; however, he has had dozens of people come to him that would like to give \$5.00 or \$20.00. He noted they’ve heard you are not supposed to do that before the big shooters put their money on the table but then how are they supposed to get the \$10,000 that is needed now. Mr. Olson suggested the committee is a good starting point and maybe everyone puts in \$1,000 or \$500. He noted that you need to start the campaign by saying it was a stretch but collectively the committee was able to come up with “X” amount. He stated you are not going to raise \$400,000 with \$5.00 and \$20.00 donations. You need to get a \$200,000 or \$100,000 gift. He indicated that you need to start strategically thinking about how do you find these people and Edina has a lot people

with a lot of money. You need to appeal to them and you have to be organized on how you want to do it.

The committee discussed what they may give to those who make large donations.

Member Lonsbury asked for two points of clarification. First, does the \$400,000 include any of the extras such as the miniature eagles or sentinels because if not and they are going to offer those things they may want to raise that amount to \$500,000. Secondly, they need to decide exactly what donors would receive if they were to donate \$250,000, \$100,000 or \$50,000 so he can start to put the materials together and sales presentation so they know what it is they are going to say to these people.

Member Kojetin stated the City Council only approved \$400,000. Mr. Keprios responded that if they find they are going to exceed the \$400,000 he would go back and make a recommendation to the Park Board and then on to the City Council saying they would like to raise some additional dollars.

Mr. Olson stated that the committee needs to come back with a campaign plan and needs to determine what the name recognition levels are going to be. He noted the committee first needs to agree is it \$400,000 or \$500,000. He indicated that once that has been decided you need to put together a spreadsheet with everyone you know and put dollars to it. He pointed out then the committee needs to find someone who has a nice home and is willing to host an open house. At that time bring in a speaker such as General Schulstad, a widow whose husband died in combat or some guys from Pearl Harbor and get that emotion in the room for the people like himself who have never served in the Armed Forces.

Member Cardarelle indicated that he knows a lot of contractors who will donate work which could be worth \$5,000 to \$10,000 or more in construction costs. He asked would that be considered over and above the \$400,000 or \$500,000 as well as the surveying he did or the donated printing Member Lonsbury was talking about. Mr. Keprios explained the committee has done a great job bringing it through the public process. He noted City Council has approved the plan and design and if that doesn't change he doesn't think they are going to give the committee any trouble about having to spend more money to build the approved memorial. Member Lonsbury stated he was anticipating those types of donations would count towards the \$500,000.

Member Lonsbury made a motion, seconded by Member Lefler, to develop a campaign plan for \$500,000 to make sure there is enough money. The rationale is in case construction costs increase, etc., as well as cover office fundraising and other operating expenses that are part of the construction.

Ayes: Christiaansen, Kojetin, Lonsbury, Reed, Lefler, Cardarelle, Kieffer, Benson, Goergen.

Motion carried.

Member Lonsbury asked Mr. Olson if he could give the committee an idea of how to break down the \$500,000. He stated the committee needs to agree as to what the donors are going to get; what are logical levels. Member Kieffer suggested they break

it up into four stars like the general ship; four star donations, three star donations, two and one star donations. He noted it would be tied to the military.

Member Lefler asked if the recommendation were four would they have four sentinels, two on each side. Member Reed replied that one person doesn't have to be on one sentinel. Chair Goergen noted that one of the things they previously agreed on, unless they want to change it, is to have a single monument of recognition and that doesn't fit into four sentinels. Member Kieffer responded they could still break it up into four stars on the same sentinel with the stars and names underneath.

Member Lonsbury made a motion, seconded by Member Lefler, that donations of \$100,000 or more are recognized on one or more sentinels, donations between \$50,000 and \$100,000 are recognized on the bench or benches and nothing else in the memorial.

Member Reed stated they haven't even decided on benches and he would like to leave benches out of it right now. He noted that he thinks everything should be recognized on one sentinel where they could put 100 names if they wanted. He indicated he thinks they don't need to put in a lot of sentinels because it would just clutter the design. He commented he thinks there should be two sentinels leading into the memorial, four at a maximum. Member Lonsbury replied he was thinking two sentinels so they would have some options.

Member Kojetin indicated that he thinks most of the big donors could care less what they get for their donation. He suggested making a brochure showing the different levels and ask the potential donor which level they would like to donate and don't worry about what they get. He indicated if someone asks do they get some kind of recognition then a committee member would have the authority to say you will get recognition someplace. Member Lonsbury asked what the authority is of the people who are out making the pitch. Member Kojetin responded he would give you the authority to make that decision. Mr. Olson indicated it would be good to have a basic foundation such as the four star level. Let potential donors know you are working on what it's going to look like but let it be known that for \$250,000 you will have recognition on a sentinel or something like that.

Chair Goergen commented that in the brochure they ought to establish the minimum level for recognition, not what the recognition is.

Member Lonsbury made an amendment to his motion, seconded by Member Lefler, donations of \$50,000 and above get recognized that there are four levels that they will recognize somewhere on the memorial and the fundraising committee is granted the authority to determine what that is including adding sentinels to the memorial as needed.

Ayes: Christiaansen, Kojetin, Lonsbury, Reed, Lefler, Cardarelle, Kieffer, Benson, Goergen.

Motion carried.

Member Benson asked Mr. Olson what he meant by “need to make it easy”. Mr. Olson explained what he meant by that is they need to have the materials right in front of the donor when they make the commitment. He stated you need to have your “go to guy” that’s going to be there to answer questions and make it as easy as possible for them to make a check, transfer stocks, IRA distributions, etc. He noted they may want to ask Dick Crockett from the Edina Foundation what he is and is not able to do.

Mr. Keprios asked what a realistic time frame is to raise this kind of money to which Mr. Olson replied it’s difficult times to raise \$500,000. Mr. Olson pointed out that when you sit down with a potential donor you want to know a lot about that person ahead of time. He explained you want to be able to ask them a question you already know the answer to because you don’t want to ask a dumb question and the answer is “no” and that’s the end of your conversation.

Mr. Olson stated at some point the committee needs to sit down and say who is going to be chair of the campaign. Maybe you have an honorary chair like General Schulstad who can talk and has done this type of thing before. You need to play on the emotion side of things and make sure there are materials ready for people to take home. He pointed out the most important thing you need to do is follow-up with these people after. That’s one of the biggest mistakes fundraisers make is not following up.

Mr. Olson commented that Member Lefler is head of the fundraising; however, because he is a judge he is restricted by law and cannot ask anyone for anything. He suggested Member Lefler administer the plan in the background because the chief fundraising person needs to be able to attend meetings and lunches, etc., to ask people for money.

Mr. Olson indicated the initial question still is where you are going to get the \$10,000. He noted Member Lonsbury stated he was going to take care of the materials but you still need \$3,800 for the artist. Maybe as a board you can somehow come up with that now. He commented you give your time and you give your treasure, that’s why you are on this board.

Member Kojetin asked if the Edina Foundation would be able to help them with a grant or something. Mr. Keprios responded that the Edina Foundation is receiving free rent at the Senior Center for a year because they are handling this project. Chair Goergen pointed out the problem with grants that he has found is it’s an annual thing. They consider all of them for a year and then on a certain date they issue the grant(s). He added that maybe the Edina Foundation has a quicker system than the ones he is aware of but it’s his understanding that it’s a process and it takes time.

Mr. Olson pointed out they need to get a newsletter or something out to the residents of Edina so they are aware of it. In addition, the committee needs to proactively seek to speak before the Chamber of Commerce, service clubs and other gatherings that offer important awareness building opportunities. He noted to also make it known that you will speak one on one in small groups of current and potential donors. Mr. Olson stated they could have Member Lonsbury set up a website where people can go and actually get a virtual tour of what the memorial will look like.

Mr. Olson suggested to the committee to try and buy and/or get a list of veterans who live in Edina or even Hennepin County where information could be mailed to them on a regular basis because that is where you are going to get your \$25, \$50 or even more donations.

It was noted that Dick Crockett is willing to open up the Edina Foundation's database; however, he doesn't have the manpower to do it. Someone from the committee will need to go through it and get the hundred biggest contributors to the Foundation or whatever number the committee agrees upon to look at.

Mr. Olson suggested to the committee if anyone receives newsletters, or annual reports to page through them and see if there is anyone you recognize at those top levels. Mr. Olson suggested to the committee that at one of their meetings to bring a list of names of potential donors on a grid and say who knows these people and how can we get to them. He stated that with two or three people they could reach most people in Edina in this group, you know somebody who knows somebody who knows somebody and would you be willing to follow-up with this person. He explained you would meet the person for coffee and just explain what it is the committee is doing; your first meeting is not to solicit them for a gift. All you want to go into your first meeting with is will they meet with you a second time because you are not going to be able to do it in one meeting. Talk to them, and get them to think about it and say do you want to hear more about this at a later date, then you give them materials and ask them to go to the website. It's socialize, present, follow-up.

At this time there was no longer a quorum, 8:17 am.